

Thank you for accepting my comments. Most of my comments have to do with limited diversity, which I assume is a function of a limited number of media organizations.

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- 1) Diversity of Programming in the Mass Electronic Media

In Radio and TV, in my opinion: the number of political viewpoints is limited; the number of cultural viewpoints is limited; the number of musical options is limited; and the number of educational programs is limited.

However, the number of childish and otherwise anti-social programs are sufficiently represented. Is there no more room for mature, creative, and enlightened programming?

- 2) 500 [Commercial] Channels on Cable TV

In the 1960's, the promise of Cable TV was that if we subscribe to the service, the fees would go towards payment for the programs, and therefore we would no longer need to be subjected to commercials. I.e., paying to watch commercials would be like paying twice.

Now that AMC has added commercials, the only commercial-free station on my Basic service is PBS, but when they're showing Sesame Street, that is not helpful for more than a few minutes.

- 3) Commercial-Centric Airwaves

I feel there should be more commercial-free options on the mass media. Any future programming that is developed as something other than a carrier for commercials would be like a breath of fresh air.

Neighborhood PBS and NPR stations, by the way, are not a complete answer to diversity on the airwaves - at least not in their present form. Our State College, Pennsylvania PBS and NPR stations are woefully minor-league compared to the public stations in, for instance, New York City (NYC). Visiting NYC provides a stunning reminder of how vividly diverse programming can be, and how quaintly limited the public programming is here in Central Pennsylvania.

Aren't PBS's and NPR's musical and current-events programs that are available in NYC also available to my local public stations? Have they consciously made a demographic decision not to carry them? Is there insufficient funding for public broadcasting to augment their offerings in my area, and perhaps even augment the number of stations they operate in each market?

The programming diversity in NYC does seem to be aided by multiple PBS and NPR transmitters. That alone would provide some minimal diversity, but in addition, their airwaves also include Cable TV productions, Pacifica, and a half-dozen fantastic college stations.

Allow me to also mention three, 24 hour "news-radio" stations on NYC's A.M. dial - WBBR, WCBS, and WINS.

We don't even have one such A.M. radio station in Central PA. There used to be continual news available - if not for 24-hours, than at least all day long - until Rush Limbaugh arose. Perhaps the radio station decided it would be easier to run syndicated shows rather than produce original programming all day long. I guess if we want to hear current events in the car, now we need to purchase a satellite radio. Maybe satellites have lots of different music programming, but can you assure me they would provide a source of diverse current events programming?

At the moment, whatever the reason, the net effect is a lack of diverse programming here in the foothills.

Although they provide quality programs, I believe it would be a mistake to expect two organizations - PBS and NPR - to be sufficient for providing broadcasting diversity. By definition, diversity suggests magnitudes more than two public-broadcasting organizations.

Conversely, we have already seen what develops when there is a "diversity" of commercial stations. They may develop new and improved methods of sensationalism, but that does nothing to further our national dialog or our gray matter.

I hope that any overhaul of your regulations will serve to improve an already dismal situation.

4) Newspapers

Growing up in NYC, we had the NY Times, The Post, The Daily News, Newsday, and the Long Island Press. By stark contrast, one conservative, establishment newspaper is quite dismal in State College.

Fortunately, there are plenty of current events and items of interest on the internet, so I feel the newspaper situation is not so critical. As more people turn towards the internet, more locally oriented websites will find it is commercially viable to act as news outlets, and the diversity of outlets will grow. It's a painful transition, waiting for this to occur. I hope the FCC will do what is in it's power to hasten the migration onto the internet.

Even our local newspaper has a web presence. I wonder if, someday, they might start making their website a complete news service, instead of only providing the top two news stories on it.

TV and Radio continue to be convenient, although shallow and inadequate news sources. Instead of competing by providing a more

substantial service, my newspaper is an example of one that chose to compete by being equally shallow. Regardless, perhaps the loss of the daily newspaper is part technology's natural evolution, and it is amazing they have lasted this long.

It would be most efficient for the FCC to support the natural evolution of the technologies, instead of artificially propping up antiquated ones by conceding massive markets at the expense of diversity.

On a tangent, I hope the FCC will consider this as one of the many reasons to support the expansion of broadband technologies. The internet offers diversity, but with limited distribution.

5) In Summary

I would not support the proposal to increase the number of media outlets a company can own within a single market. If they cannot be profitable under today's regulations, the diversity of our media sources should not be further jeopardized so a few media giants can remain profitable a little while longer.

If the limited number of media outlets within any market are controlled by differing organizations, there is a chance they will present differing points of view. The outlets that exist already suffer from limited diversity, and allowing organizations to own a greater percentage of outlets would be going in the wrong direction.

Yours truly,
-Neil J Nitzberg-